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INCLUSIVE SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY (BENI MELLAL-KHENIFRA)

Promoting regional development based on the inclusion and active participation of women, young people, people with special needs, and the rural population.

USAID's new five-year strategy aims to support Morocco's effort to advance its stability, prosperity, and self-reliance by improving local governance, spurring inclusive economic growth, strengthening community development, and fostering a well-educated population. An in-depth analytical process designed to identify where and how USAID's resources could be best spent showed that, although characterized by low socio-economic indicators, Beni Mellal-Khenifra also has abundant development opportunities and political will to act on emerging opportunities.

USAID RESPONSE

To support the region in identifying opportunities and the best approaches to ensure inclusive socio-economic development in Beni Mellal-Khenifra, USAID consulted with stakeholders in the region using a systems approach and convened a group of community, government, academia, and private sector representatives from across the region for co-creation workshops.

The Inclusive Socio-Economic Development (ISED) activity grew out of this consultative co-creation process. ISED's goal is to support Morocco in achieving its national and local development priorities for accelerated and equitable economic growth built on greater inclusion and active participation of women,

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youth, people with disabilities (PWDs), and marginalized citizens. ISED also includes a strong focus on gender equity and private sector engagement to achieve scalable and sustainable outcomes.

The activity has two main components: (1) To improve governance and citizen participation; and (2) To enhance livelihoods and business activity. The activity will work closely with the Beni Mellal-Khenifra Regional Council to assess the region's 135 communes and select 20-25 of them for funding opportunities based on high growth potential, effective leadership, and high levels of vulnerability (i.e., poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, and disability rates).

The ISED activity will also include a small grant program to support local actors to achieve improved participatory governance and/or inclusive economic growth. Beneficiaries will include civil society organizations (CSOs), cooperatives, enterprises, and aspiring entrepreneurs from the University Sultan Moulay Slimane Innovation Lab and Challenge Competitions.

EXPECTED RESULTS

Component One: Local governance and citizen participation improved

- Sub-national Government Institution (SGI) performance, transparency, and efficiency increased
- Civil society empowered through improved access to information and increased participation in local governance
- Governance of business and economic growth ecosystems improved

Component Two: Livelihoods and business activity through innovation enhanced

- Inclusion of youth, women, and PWDs in business increased
- Business and job growth increased through improved market access, business development services, finance, and small grants (focused initially on agriculture/agri-business and tourism)
- Workforce development improved by better aligning training to market needs (including soft skills) and providing quality work-readiness offerings

FACTS AND FIGURES

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS:

- FHI 360
- Financial Services Volunteers Corps (FSVC/LixCap)
- Mississippi State University
- Association Intilaka AIDCA

HOST COUNTRY PARTNER:

- The Wilaya of Beni Mellal-Khenifra
- The Beni Mellal-Khenifra Regional Council

LOCATION: Beni Mellal-Khenifra

BUDGET: \$18 million

DURATION: 2021-2025

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